

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PORTUGUESE HIGHER EDUCATION: PRESENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PORTUGAL IS A BINARY SYSTEM: IT COMPRISES UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES.

THERE ARE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES.

BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SYSTEMS ARE REGULATED BY THE SAME LAW – LAW Nº 62/2007 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS LEGAL REGIME.

IN 2010 THERE WERE 393 000 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL – 183 000 STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES; 110 000 STUDENTS IN THE PUBLIC POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES AND 90 000 STUDENTS IN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION.

THIS MEANS THAT 37, 5% OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION ARE ENROLLED IN POLYTECHNICAL EDUCATION.

THE PORTUGUESE PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IS COMPRISED OF 14 UNIVERSITIES AND 15 POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES. THERE ARE ALSO FIVE NON INTEGRATED SCHOOLS: NURSING; TOURISM AND NAUTICAL STUDIES.

THE 15 POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES ARE LOCATED ALL AROUND PORTUGAL: NORTH; CENTER; AND SOUTH – ALONG THE COAST AND IN THE INTERIOR AS OPPOSED TO THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES THAT ARE MAINLY LOCATED ON THE COASTLINE.

THE LARGEST POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE HAS 15000 STUDENTS AND THE SMALLEST HAS 2000 STUDENTS,

UNIVERSITIES CAN CONFER THREE DEGREES: BACHELOR DEGREE; MASTER AND DOCTORAL DEGREE

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTIONS CAN ONLY CONFER TWO DEGREES: BACHELOR AND MASTER.

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES CAN ALSO OFFER SHORT CYCLE HIGHER EDUCATION WHICH DOES NOT CONFER A DEGREE (CET – TECHNOLOGICAL SPECIALIZATION COURSES) – 1- 1,5 YEAR DURATION.

POLYTECHIC INSTITUTES CAN NOT CONFER A DOCTORAL DEGREE BUT CAN ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES WITH PORTUGUESE AND FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES TO CONFER THE DEGREE.

THE MAIN SCIENTIC AREAS WHERE POLYTECHIC INSTITUTES OFFER DEGREES ARE; TEACHER TRAINING; ENGINEERING; BUSINESS; HEALTH; AND AGRARIAN SCIENCES.

OTHER AREAS INCLUDE MUSIC; DANCE; CINEMA; DESIGN; TOURISM AND NAUTICAL STUDIES.

#### AUTONOMY AND GOVERNANCE

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTIONS HAVE THE FOLLOWING AUTONOMIES / SOME ARE RECOGNIZED IN THE PORTUGUESE CONSTITUTION AND ALL OF THEM ARE RECOGNIZED BY THE HIGHER EDUCATION LEGAL REGIME / LAW N' 62/2007:

- STATUTORY – POWER TO DEFINE THEIR INTERNAL ORGANIZATION – ADOPT THEIR OWN STATUTES WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE LAW;

- SCIENTIFIC – RIGHT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO DETERMINE AND ORGANIZE SCIENTIFIC MATTERS (EXAMPLE: RESEARCH);
- PEDAGOGICAL – RIGHT TO DEFINE TEACHING METHODS AND EVALUATION; PROGRAM ORGANIZATION; CLASS DISTRIBUTION AMONGST ACADEMIC STAFF;
- DISCIPLINARY – POWER TO PUNISH DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS – ENTIRE STAFF (ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC STAFF);
- ADMINISTRATIVE – SELF-GOVERNMENT THROUGH ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES – MANAGE STAFF; ENTER INTO PUBLIC CONTRACTS; ADOPT INTERNAL REGULATIONS; RECRUIT ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC STAFF, MAKE DECISIONS ON INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS;
- FINANCIAL – HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS HAVE THEIR OWN BUDGET AND THE POWER TO MANAGE IT, ADMINISTER THEIR REVENUE (OWN RESOURCES) AND DECIDE ON EXPENSES;
- PATRIMONIAL – HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ARE THE OWNERS OF THEIR BUILDINGS AND LANDS – THEY HAVE THE POWER TO ADMINISTER THESE BUILDINGS AND LANDS, POWER TO SIGN RENTAL CONTRACTS; POWER TO SELL BUILDINGS AND LANDS IS DEPENDANT UPON MINISTERIAL AUTHORIZATION. (PROCEEDS 50% - 100% BUILD OTHER BUILDINGS FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION).
- CULTURAL – DEFINE THEIR CULTURAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTIONS ARE GOVERNED BY:

- PRESIDENT – EXECUTIVE – HIGHER EDUCATION PROFESSOR OR PERSON OF OUTSTANDING MERIT - ELECTED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL – 4 YEAR MANDATE – RENEWABLE ONE TIME.
- GENERAL COUNCIL (DELIBERATIVE BODY); (TEACHERS- 50%; STUDENTS – 15%; NON ACADEMIC STAFF – 5% AND EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES – 30%). MEMBERS HAVE A FOUR YEAR MANDATE – STUDENTS /2 YEAR MANDATE.
- MANAGEMENT COUNCIL – ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – COMPOSITION IS DEFINED BY THE STATUTES – FIVE PERSONS – PRESIDENT; VP; ADMINISTRATOR.

OTHER BODIES OF GOVERNMENT/POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTIONS MUST ALSO HAVE:

- SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COUNCILS (ACADEMIC STAFF WITH CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS) – INSTITUTIONAL OR SCHOOL LEVEL;
- PEDAGOGICAL COUNCIL (ACADEMIC STAFF; STUDENTS AND STUDENT OMBUDSMAN);
- STUDENT OMBUSMAN

## PRESENT CHALLENGES – FIVE

1 – TEACHING STAFF – THE HIGHER EDUCATION LAW REQUIRES THAT 50% (FIFTY PERCENT) OF THE TEACHING STAFF HOLD A DOCTORAL DEGREE OR ARE SPECIALISTS (TITLE BASED ON THE RECOGNITION OF TEN YEARS IN A CERTAIN PROFESSION). AS OF 2009 THE NEW ACADEMIC CAREER STATUTE REQUIRES THAT UAS PROFESSORS IN PORTUGAL HOLD A DOCTORAL DEGREE TO BEGIN THEIR CAREER. PRESENTLY, ALL OF THE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES ARE SUPPORTING THEIR ACADEMIC STAFF IN ORDER FOR THEM TO ACQUIRE THE DOCTORAL DEGREE.

2 – CREATION OF CENTERS OF APPLIED RESEARCH – THERE ARE PRESENTLY 11 (ELEVEN) APPLIED RESEARCH CENTERS IN PORTUGAL. THREE HAVE BEEN EVALUATED BY THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND WERE CONSIDERED AS EXCELLENT.

3 - ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS - PORTUGAL HAS SOUGHT AN INTERNATIONAL BAIL OUT. THE FOLLOWING YEARS WILL BE MARKED BY BUDGET CUTS; THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT HIGHER EDUCATION WILL BE SPARED

4 - HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK REORGANIZATION – TWO TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITIES HAVE ALREADY BEGAN A MERGER PROCESS AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED THAT IT IS WILLING TO SUPPORT THE CONSTITUTION OF REGIONAL CONSORTIUMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

5 - INTERNATIONALISATION – POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES ARE SIGNING PROTOCOLS WITH PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE SPEAKING COUNTRIES – BRAZIL; ANGOLA; MOZAMBIQUE; CAPE VERDE; GUINÉ; EAST TIMOR. POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES IN PORTUGAL ARE ALSO COOPERATING AND PARTNERING WITH EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND WOULD LIKE TO COOPERATE BEYOND EUROPE.

THANK YOU!